

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 02438 211801Z

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

SP-02 L-01 SCA-01 EB-03 PRS-01 ACDA-10 /051 W

----- 000400

R 211710Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7468

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2438

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US

SUBJECT: ARBATOV ON TRADE AND EMIGRATION

1. COLUMBIA PROFESSOR MARSHALL SHULMAN, WHO HAS BEEN HERE WITH A GROUP OF ACADEMIC COLLEAGUES UNDER PUGWASH AUSPICES, FILLED US IN ON A CONVERSATION ON TRADE AND EMIGRATION HIS GROUP HAD WITH ARBATOV EARLY THIS WEEK. SHULMAN SAID THAT ARBATOV, AS WELL AS OTHER SOVIETS THE GROUP HAD MET, APPROACHED THE TRADE QUESTION WITH "STUDIED CASUALNESS," AS IF TO SAY THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOT GREATLY DEPENDENT ON AN INCREASED TRADING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. ARBATOV TOLD SHULMAN THAT THE SOVIETS HAD MADE A MISTAKE IN APPEARING TOO EAGER FOR MFN AND CREDITS, THUS MAKING THEMSELVES VULNERABLE FOR U.S. PRESSURE.

2. ARBATOV SAID (AS HE HAS CONSISTENTLY) THAT THE REASON FOR SOVIET TURNDOWN OF MFN AND CREDITS WAS NOT THE CREDIT CEILING BUT WAS THE DISCRIMINATION IMPLIED IN THE DECISION HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE, ARBATOV SAID, BEFORE SOVIETS KNEW ABOUT EMIGRATION PROVISION. ARBATOV SEEMED TO SEE THE STEVENSON AMENDMENT AS HAVING PURELY A RESTRICTIVE INTENTION RATHER THAN AS PROVIDING A WAY TO EXTEND CREDITS FOR THE SOVIETS ABOVE THE \$300 MILLION CEILING, SHULMAN SAID.

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 02438 211801Z

3. ARBATOV NOTED, IN SORROW RATHER THAN ANGER, THAT IF A \$5 BILLION ANNUAL BILATERAL TRADE LEVEL HAD BEEN POSSIBLE, THE USSR WOULD HAVE BUILT UP ITS PROGRAM FOR A MANUFACTURED GOODS EXPORT CAPACITY. HOWEVER, WITH THE CURRENT EXPECTATION OF A TRADE LEVEL NOT MORE THAN \$1 BILLION A YEAR, THE USSR PROBABLY WILL NOT DO THIS, SINCE IT WOULD TAKE A MAJOR IMPETUS IN AN AREA IN WHICH THE SOVIET ECONOMY IS NOT PARTICULARLY ADEPT.

4. SHULMAN SAID THAT HE COULD GLEAN FROM ARBATOV NO INDICATION OF WHAT TYPE OF NEW LEGISLATION THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT. SHULMAN TOLD ARBATOV, HOWEVER, THAT HE DID NOT FORESEE ANY EARLY POSSIBILITY OF DROPPING EMIGRATION PROVISIONS FROM THE LEGISLATION.
STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: IMMIGRATION CONTROL, IMMIGRATION LAW, FOREIGN TRADE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW02438
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750063-0050
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750224/aaaaauwj.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARBATOV ON TRADE AND EMIGRATION
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006